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TRANSLATIONS

FROM THE

ORIGINAL CHINESE,

WITH

N O T E S.

by Robert Morrison

俗問而國入禁問而竟入

"ENTERING A TERRITORY ENQUIRE WHAT ARE ITS LAWS;

"ENTERING A NATION ENQUIRE WHAT ARE ITS CUSTOMS."

LE-KING.

CANTON, CHINA:

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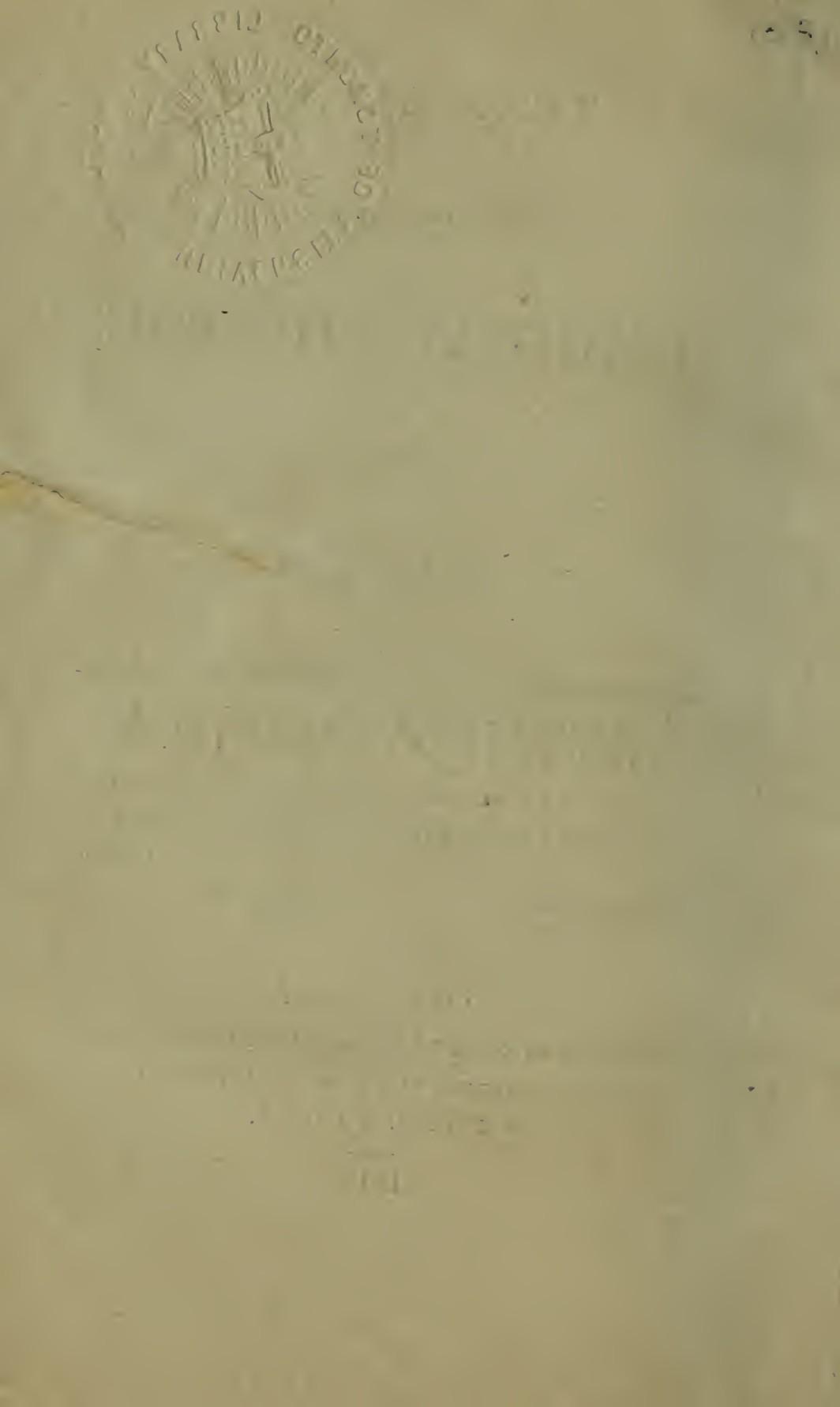
AT THE HONORABLE EAST INDIA COMPANY'S PRESS,

BY P. P. THOMS.

1815.

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BEQUEST OF
REV. CANON SCADDING, D. D.
TORONTO: 1801.



MANY of the official reports made to the Emperor, from the different parts of the Chinese Empire, and orders issued by Imperial Authority, are published daily at Peking : these are sent to the principal Officers in the Provinces, who allow such parts as they please to be transcribed and sold to the People. From these Manuscript documents, the following Translations with explanatory Notes, have been made by the Rev. Mr. MORRISON.

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TRANSLATIONS

FROM THE

ORIGINAL CHINESE.

ON the Eighteenth of October, 1813,* as His Imperial Majesty was about to enter Pekin, on his return from a Summer's excursion † to Jē-ho, a party of Conspirators entered the Imperial Palace, and kept possession of a part of it for three days. The first intimation of so extraordinary an occurrence made to the distant parts of the Empire, was the following Document, purporting to be drawn up, and issued by the hand of the Emperor himself, trembling with apprehension for the safety of his Person and the stability of his Throne.

* Ninth Moon, fifteenth day of the eighteenth year of the Reign of Kea-king.

† It is, as is well known, the custom of the present reigning Family in China, to go every year in the Summer Season to Jē-ho, professedly to retire from the heat of the Summer Months,

PROCLAMATION

BY HIS

Imperial Majesty KEA-KING, Emperor of China.

Received in Canton, Nov. 5th, 1813.

PROCLAMATION to announce a Revolution which has taken place, and to take blame to myself.

Eighteen years have elapsed, since, possessed of but inferior virtue, I looked up and received with profound veneration the throne from my Imperial Father; after which I dared not to resign myself to ease or inattention to the affairs of Government.

I had but just ascended the throne, when the Sect of the Pë-

but (as the Chinese affirm) covertly for the purpose of keeping a way open towards Manchow Tartary, in case of being under the necessity of flying thither.

lïen,* seduced, into a state of confusion, four Provinces, and the People suffered more than my feelings can bear to express. I ordered my Generals to go against them, and after eight years conflict, reduced them to subjection. I then hoped, that with my Children (the People) I should have enjoyed unceasing pleasure and repose.

On the sixth of the eighth Moon, the Sect of Tëen-le, (Celestial Reason, Illuminati,) a banditti of vagabonds, suddenly created disturbance, and caused much injury, extending from the District of Chang-yuen, in the Province of Pë-che-le, to the District Tsaou, in Shan-tung. I hastened to order Wän, the Viceroy of Pekin, to lead forth an army to exterminate them, and to restore peace. This affair, however, yet remained at the distance of a thousand le from the Capital. But suddenly, on the fifteenth of the ninth Moon, rebellion arose under my own arm.† The calamity has sprung from my own house. A banditti of upwards of seventy men, of the Sect Tëen-le, violated the prohibited Gate, and entered within

* Pë-lïen, the white water Flower, the denomination of a particular Sect, or Brotherhood. The name probably has an allusion to the Goddess Kwan-yin, who is often represented setting on this Flower.

† Under my own armpit, meaning his own Family.

side; they wounded the Guard, and rushed into the Inner Palace; four rebels were seized and bound. Three others ascended the wall with a flag. My Imperial second Son, seized a musket and shot two of them; my Nephew killed the third. For this deliverance I am indebted to the energies of my second Son. The Princes and Chief Officers of the Lung-tsung Gate, led forth Troops, and after two days and one night's utmost exertion, completely routed the Rebels.

My family, Ta-tsing, has continued to rule the Empire, during a hundred and seventy years. My Grand Father, and Royal Father, in the most affectionate manner, loved the People as Children. Their benevolence and virtues, I am unable to express! Though I cannot pretend to have equalled their good Government and love of the People, yet I have not oppressed nor ill-used my People. This sudden change I am unable to account for. It must arise from the low state of my virtue, and my accumulated Imperfections. Though this Rebellion has broken forth in a moment, the evil has been long collecting. Four words, "Supineness, Indulgence, Sloth, Contempt," express the sources whence this great crime has arisen; and hence, also it is, that affairs whether at home about Court, or abroad in the Empire, are equally in a bad state. Though I have again, and a third time given warning till my tongue is blunted, and my lips parched with frequent repe-

tition, yet none of my Ministers have been able to comprehend it : they have ruled carelessly, and thereby caused the present occurrence. Nothing like it took place during the Dynasties of Han, of Tang, of Sung, or of Ming. The attempt to commit assassination in the close of the Dynasty Ming, was not a tenth part so bad as the present affair. When I think of it, I cannot bear to mention it.

I would examine myself, reform and rectify my heart, to accord with the gracious conduct of Heaven above me, and to do away with the resentments of the People, who are placed below me.

All my Officers, who would be faithfully devoted to the Dynasty Ta-tsing, should exert themselves for the benefit of the Country, and do their utmost to make amends for my defects, as well as to reform the manners of the People. Those who can be contented to be mean, may hang their Caps* against the wall, and go home to end their days; not sit inactive as dead bodies in their places, merely to secure their emoluments, and thereby encrease my crimes. The tears follow the traces of my pencil.

I dispatch this to inform the whole Empire.

* The Cap with its ball or button, are the insignia of Office.

The Rebellion was generally considered to have originated with one of the Emperor's Brothers; and the Emperor himself was supposed to be aware of this; but, from a variety of motives, partly from fear, and partly from regard to the continuance of his family on the throne, he deemed it prudent to forbear acting against him. A man of the name of Lin-tsing, was finally considered the head of the Rebel party.

The Rebels took possession of a Town and District, called Hwă-hĕen, and neighbouring places in Shan-tung. Troops were called in from Tartary, and the Imperial Forces were led on by a Person named Na-yen-ching, since made Viceroy of Pĕ-che-le.

After a few months resistance on the part of the Rebels, Hwă-hĕen was taken by the Government Troops, and the Rebel cause gradually declined. The whole of this year has been taken up in trials and executions. Several hundreds have been put to death;—some beheaded; some suffered a slow and ignominious death, being despatched either by seven, or twenty-four strokes of the fatal sword, according to the criminal's degree of guilt; and an individual or two were deprived of life, by their bodies being slowly cut into minute parts.

PEKING GAZETTE.

Kea-king, 18th Year, 10th Moon, 6th Day.

OCTOBER 29, 1813.

THE Tribunal of Punishments, with profound respect, report their proceedings in the trial of the rebels, and request His Majesty's decision on the punishments to be inflicted. They look up, and beg His Holiness* to inspect the proceedings.

We have already reported the confessions of several of the criminals, who were connected with the rebel Lin-tsing, the Person who conspired with the Eunuch Lew-tě-tsae, to excite insurrection. We have had to thank your Holiness for examining them. We have, by the application of torture, rigorously examined them, together and apart, and find that the declarations

* The word translated Holiness, is Shing, a word which denotes perfect, impeccable, moral excellence, such as the Sages, Confucius, and a few others, were said to be possessed of.

which they have vomited forth, all agree, respecting the formation of the conspiracy to excite insurrection and rebellion. There is no doubt, that they are all principal criminals. According to law, exciting rebellion is punished, whether the parties be principals or accessories, by a lingering and ignominious death.

Lin-tsing, and the other rebels who assembled the banditti, and by their wily machinations created insurrection, have killed and wounded many officers and men. The Eunuch, Lew-tĕ-tsae, audaciously ventured to listen to, and assist the rebels. The law sentences them, without distinction, to a lingering and ignominious death. Many of them are severely wounded, and it is unnecessary again to examine them; nor is it expedient to put them all to death. We propose to reserve Lin-tsing and the Eunuch Lew-tĕ-tsae, with two others, for your Majesty's personal examination. There are four others, whom we would examine further, and therefore retain them in prison.

We request your Majesty's permission, to sentence Kung-shoo, and the Eunuch Chang-tae-yō, and others, in all, sixteen Persons, to be on the twentieth instant, bound, taken to the market, and there to have their bodies cut into minute pieces.* Chang-wān, and

* Tsun, the tenth part of a cubit; cut to inches.

the others, in all, twelve persons; we request that on the twenty-first instant, they may, in like manner, be bound, carried to the public market, and there be put to death by cutting into minute pieces.

Let those who have already suffered death, together with Kung-shoo, have their lifeless heads suspended at the gates of every city, to shew what are the laws of the land, and to satisfy the revenge of the multitude. We report these things in the hearing of the holy Sovereign, to know whether or not, our proceedings be right, and respectfully wait the Imperial decision, that we may act in obedience thereto.

Reply,—“The report is announced.”

PEKING GAZETTE.

Kea-king, 19th Year, 1st Moon, 1st Day.

JANUARY 21, 1814.

The following Imperial Edict has been respectfully received.

CHANG-YU has reported the preceedings in the trial of the rebels Téen-kë-che, and others, and also of Le-king, the criminal in prison, who dispersed flags, the ensigns of rebellion.

The criminal Le-king, who traitorously formed the ensigns of rebellion, and combined with his keepers to connect and assemble Téen-kë-che and other Persons, with the intention of entering the Prison, and commencing insurrection, has committed a crime of the highest magnitude. It has been well and promptly done to seize the leading offenders, and apportion some to a lingering and ignominious death; others to decapitation and public exposure of their lifeless heads.

Kang-leang-keun, the Officer who first discovered the plot, and seized the criminals, has zealously exerted himself; let him be graciously rewarded with the situation of Taou-héen, and as before retain the honorary badge of being promoted one degree, as a due commendation of the deserving, and a stimulus to exertion.

The three Officers of the District, who failed to discover the least trace of a conspiracy, formed with the Keepers of the Prison to excite insurrection and rebellion, have shewn remissness, not to be compared with common cases of neglect. Let Woo-kea-ke, be degraded from his Office, exiled to a place newly occupied on the extreme confines of the Empire, and kept to hard labour. Let Chang-tě-poo be degraded and sent to the Army, to exert himself, and atone for his offence. Let Mō-king-suy be forthwith deprived of his Office, to operate as a warning to others.

Respect this,

PEKING GAZETTE.

Kea-king, 19th Year, 1st Moon, 15th Day.

FEBRUARY 4, 1814.

The following Imperial Edict, has been respectfully received.

LAST year, when the rebels broke open and entered the Prohibited Gate, there was, in the air, obscurely seen, an appearance of the image of the God Kwan-te;* on perceiving it, the rebels became alarmed, and fled to hide themselves. Their immediate destruction followed.

To-day, Na-yen-ching (the General commanding the Imperial Troops) has reported, that when the town Hwă was re-taken, the

* A warrior famous in Chinese History, who was deified after his death. The present Imperial Family sacrifices to him in Spring and Autumn.

rebels during the darkness of night, made a desperate attack ; the Government Troops were playing upon them with spears and arrows, but were unable to produce any real effect ; when suddenly, from a temple by the side of the town, a flame rose spontaneously and shone bright as noon. The Imperial Troops then attacked in two divisions, pressing on the rebels from opposite points ; their retreat was cut off, and the entire number of the rebels completely destroyed.

After the affair was over, it was found, that by the side of the city, was a temple dedicated to the image of Kwan-te. The temple was completely burnt down ; but the divine image, and it alone, was preserved, not having been moved or injured in the least possible degree.

During the confusion caused by the rebels on this occasion, repeatedly has Kwan-te manifested himself and afforded protection. I feel the most profound and sincere veneration and gratitude.

It is ordered, that the proper court, with the highest respect and veneration, consult about, and propose two words to be added to the original inscription of the God. Let the words be presented to me for my approval, and after that, be published throughout

the Empire, to be made use of as a return for the God's protection.

Let the temple at the district Hwă, be rebuilt and adorned ; and when finished, let the Lieutenant-Governor report, and request me to write with my own hand, an inscription for the front of the temple, to be hung up with due respect above the gate.

Respect this.

PEKING GAZETTE.

Kea-king, 19th Year, 1st Moon, 15th Day.

FEBRUARY 4, 1814.

The following Imperial Edict, has been respectfully received.

WOO-KING, the She-lang, presented a statement respecting the Contributions of the People, to the exigences of the State. His statement was transferred to the Hoo-poo, to be deliberated on, and the result presented to His Majesty.

Pan-she-gän and Soo-ling-gä have consulted and requested, that for the time being, some further Benevolences* may be enacted.

Loo-yin-poo, Kwei-fang, and Chaou-ping-chung, have consulted

* Keuen, Contributions to the State, required in the form of presents.

and requested that the usual Benevolences may be extended and increased.

To extend the usual regulations, is troublesome and difficult to be put in execution: and it is a question, whether enacting new Benevolences, would help the present exigencies. Is there no good plan, different from these two, to furnish an adequate supply for the use of the nation? It is ordered, that these four Persons, Tsaou-chin-yung, Tō-tsin, Tēē-paou, and Ying-ho, again deliberate and report the result.

Respect this,

PEKING GAZETTE.

Kea-king, 19th Year, 1st Moon, 20th Day.

FEBRUARY 9, 1814.

The following Imperial Edict, has been respectfully received.

A YU-SHE, Chin-yung-wang, has presented a Memorial, requesting that Husbandmen may be employed by Government on waste lands. He says, "That the Imperial Steward annually repairs and adorns various places. It is requested, That he be ordered to examine strictly, what works are going on at the Three-Hills and the Five-Gardens, and endeavour to lessen the expense; at the same time, selecting parts from the waste lands Kwang-ning, Tse-yang, and other places, and try if they may not be cultivated. If he succeeds, let the same plan be adopted in the Provinces, on the north and west."

Both within and without Peking, all the Imperial works, great and small, have been put a stop to for some time. For several months

past, no work has been undertaken or carried on, either at the Palace, or Yuen-ming-yuen Gardens. This is what every body has seen and heard of. The Three-Hills is a place to which His Majesty resorts. As to Imperial Gardens, there is but one, Yuen-ming-yuen. The Gardens called, "Constant Spring," and "Beautiful Spring," are both situated within the Imperial Garden. There is no such place as the Five-Gardens,

The Imperial works are at present stopped; and various expenses about the Palace, greatly diminished. Economy is necessary. Still the trouble and expenditure are great. The duties of the said Yu-she, lie without side the Palace. How can he know its concerns fully?

As to his notion of choosing waste lands, and commencing Agriculture on them: the supplies are at present inadequate to the current expenditure of the nation; and shall the Imperial gold be taken and thrown away on useless experiments? To call upon the People to come forward with their Property, is not becoming the dignity of Government.

That which is recommended by him, is vague and unreasonable; it must not be done. It is wholly useless to deliberate upon it.

Respect this.

PEKING GEZETTE.

Kea-king, 19 Year, 1st Moon, 20th Day,

FEBRUARY 9, 1814,

The following Imperial Edict, has been respectfully received.

WOO-KING has presented a statement, requesting for the time being, to enact Voluntary Contributions, (or Benevolences) to the State.

I consider Benevolences as by no means a part of good Government, and am apprehensive, that they will not afford any real supply, but give trouble for no purpose.

The subject was delivered over to the Board of Revenue for their special consideration. They recommended an extension of the usual Benevolences; but the impediments to this plan cannot be removed. Nor can it be calculated with certainty, that the

temporary enactment of Benevolences, will supply adequately the wants of the Government.

I sent down an order for the four Persons, Tsaou-ching-yung, Tō-tsin, Tēē-paou, and Ying-ho to deliberate and report. Ying-ho alone reported, that he considered the Benevolences a very bad plan. What he proposed for supplying the wants of the nation was; first, To revert to the ancient mode of supplying the army; and second, To open more of the mines throughout the Country. This last plan has been before enjoined and acted upon. If the mines be opened, it will lead to much that is nefarious and troublesome. It must not be done.

To-day, Tsaou-ching-yung, and the other two Persons, have again deliberated, and requested the temporary Benevolences.

At this time, the expenses of the Army, of the Rivers,* &c. have exceeded much common years. The wants of the National Family are increasing, and must be provided for. Since there is not now any other better plan, let what they request, be for the present complied with.

* Yellow River, great Canals, &c.

Let the proper courts, make out lists for the Provinces of Shantung and Ho-nan. This is, in me, the result of mere necessity, and does not show that to enact Benevolences is a thing which ought positively to be done.

Officers of State, who feed on the emoluments of the Prince, should all be faithful in the service of the Prince. After the reports which have already been presented, it is unnecessary again to annoy with statements*. If any of the higher officers, have any plans which they truly know, and clearly perceive, will supply the wants of the State, it is incumbent on them to act with the utmost possible sincerity, and to prevent the least tendency to slide into nefarious proceedings. They are not allowed to fill up paper with vague reasonings and empty talk; which only tends to show that they are still afflicted with the disease, which produces a great deal of specious reasoning, but very little meritorious action.

If positively, they have seized hold on something that will be effectual to supply the expenses of the Army and the Rivers, let them state it, and I will select what may be put in force, and

* Some recommended the coining a large quantity of copper money.

immediately stop the Benevolences ; but if they merely have to say, that the enactment of Benevolences is not good ; at the same time, have not better plans to propose, they tell me nothing that I do not already know. It is useless to present unmeaning papers.

Respect this.



There were several other papers on the same subject. His Majesty was extremely unwilling to adopt the plan which he here considers the only one which would answer the immediate end proposed ; and which was finally adopted. The higher officers of Government, Mercantile Companies, and wealthy Country Gentlemen, were required to come forward with Voluntary Contributions to the State.

PEKING GAZETTE.

Kea-king, 18th Year, 1st Moon, 26th Day.

FEBRUARY 15, 1814.

THE Yu-she, Hea-sew-shoo, presents to His Majesty, with profound respect, the following statement, for the purpose of obtaining a rigorous prohibition of irregularly seizing innocent Persons, that repose may be enjoyed by the good part of the community ; and, that a happy and auspicious concord may prevail. With profound respect, it is reported, in audience of His Majesty, whose pleasure is requested. Looking up, it is begged, that His Holiness may glance at the affair.

Last year, the banditti of robbers, plotting insurrection and rebellion, spread confusion to three Provinces ; and occasioned the destruction of not fewer than several tens of thousands of Persons. The rebel leaders were such, that the wide spreading canopy of Heaven, and the containing Earth would not endure them.

Their destruction, from first to last, is indeed fully calculated to give joy to the hearts of men, and to manifest the good Government of the Country. At this moment, many offenders are from time to time brought before the tribunals, and the names of others are pointed out, who are not yet taken. If they be indeed rebels, it is unquestionably proper to seize, try, and execute upon them the sentence of the law ; but if they be unoffending People, who are, under the pretext of seizing and examining rebels, involved in numberless distresses, by those who merely wish for rewards of meritorious services, an evil which is daily and monthly increasing, like the interminable spread of noxious weeds, it is far from being the way to appease the multitude, or tranquillize the People.

I read the Imperial Edict received, Kea-king, eighteenth year, twelfth moon, twenty-third day, saying, " After the fifteenth of the tenth moon, the criminals apprehended, have been such as had scarcely made themselves acquainted with the sect ; or have been entirely without offence against the law. On their trials, nothing has been discovered, whilst the famous rebels have escaped to a distance, and evaded the net spread for them. To involve the innocent in this manner, must strike terror into every one. I love and cherish the People.* To protect a good subject, is an increase

* Original is Black heads, a tender expression for People.

of my own happiness : to put to death an innocent Person, is what my heart cannot bear. If any for the sake of appearing to deserve well, shall falsely accuse another, let him be punished according to law. If any from private revenge shall accuse another of rebellion, the law is explicit ; it is, let the accuser be considered a rebel. Respect this."

Reading this, I looked up with veneration to our Supreme Emperor, whose love to the People, and protection to his infant Family,* is of a piece with the benevolent love of Heaven. Far and near, Magistrates and People, are joyful and thankful. All the various courts should respectfully act in obedience to the above, then may they be said to realize His Holiness' heart's wish.

But I have heard, that in opposition to the above Edict, there are, every where, still many innocent People, who are involved and brought to trial. As for instance, Tan-këë, and others, all of whom were Persons brought from distant Provinces, to the tribunal at Peking. Some had been guilty of offences remote from rebellion ; others were entirely innocent. Their accusers charged them with being rebels, and the officers who examined them,

* The whole nation.

either enticed or tortured them to a confession.* Thus Le-tē-shwuy and Wang-sze-tsing, were accused of having treasonable books, and of being united with the conspirators for the purpose of rebellion. Wang-sze-tsē confessed, that he had learned the doctrines of the sect; Le-tē-shwuy, that he had followed a multitude on a plundering party; but, that they intended rebellion, was extorted from them by the arts and the tortures of those who examined them. The District officers, unable to take the real criminals, sweep off at random those who come in their way, and those against whom there is not the least proof, are falsely accused of rebellion. This is done to avoid being reprimanded on the one hand, and on the other, to obtain meritorious distinction.+ I have heard that of innocent men, who removed from court to court, have been severely mangled and tortured, till at last, having arrived at Peking, they have died; and that of those, who, guilty of no capital offence, have died in prison, the number is upwards

* The officers who examine offenders, frequently promise to use their influence in behalf of criminals; if they will but confess, what is required with promises, they never mean to perform; and which requirement is often any thing but the truth, if lying promises fail, they then threaten and torture.

+ The Emperor rewarded some with peacock's feathers, who were afterwards found out to be impostors, and he was obliged to take their feathers from them.

of ten. There are more than a hundred, who are involved and detained in confinement, that they may act as witnesses.

In the reign of a holy and enlightened Prince, it cannot be intentionally, that any one should suffer unjust confinement; yet, in going from court to court for trial, and undergoing torture ere they can be cleared from blame, and liberated; their personal health is completely destroyed, and their whole property wasted. The affair is indeed lamentable.

As in the case of the criminal sent from Shan-hae-kwan, who was tried by the tribunal of punishments, which found, that the superior officers had allowed the inferior officers to seduce or torture to a confession; it is apprehended, that in every Province much of this has prevailed. If distress and trouble be thus continually occasioned, what will finally be the result?

Further, in the Neighbourhood of Peking, are many simple People, who keep fasts and recite prayers to Fō. These, the police officers have fettered and seized, and without any real cause excite disturbance. It is apprehended, that the same extends to every Province. This all proceeds from the District officers disobeying your Majesty's former Edict, requiring them to exert themselves, to manage well; and from an unfeeling intention of involving

every body indiscriminately, which prevents your Majesty's gracious kindness from extending to the People

At this moment, the genial showers have not yet descended ; how the coming year will be, is not known. But after Armies have been put in motion, an abundant harvest is necessary, in order completely to remove the miseries that are felt, and compose the minds of the People.

The heart of Heaven is benevolence and love.* The heart of your Holiness is Heaven's, and extends to all your People true kindness. Did all your Ministers act well, celestial happiness and harmony would be superinduced, and would excite in all a real and corresponding effect.

I state these things in audience of your Majesty, and request that the Governors and Lieutenant Governors in all the Provinces, may be ordered to enjoin all the District officers to be vigi-

* This is a fine sentence, and seems Heaven personified to denote the Supreme Being, an idea to which our minds are familiar ; but they often join Earth with Heaven, and personify it also, in a way that bewilders the mind much, and seems to bring it back to mere matter.

lent against real criminals ; and if any be apprehended from suspicious circumstances, that they may be careful to come to the examination with unprejudiced minds. If facts be discovered, let them transfer the criminals to the court at Peking; but they should not allow the examining officers to seduce and torture the People into confessions of guilt.

Should it again occur, that innocent People are taken up, and by arts and torture made to confess; or be made to involve themselves, from the pain of long kneeling on their chains; or be beaten to satisfy some private revenge; then, in obedience to your Majesty's former Edict, let the parties be punished, as in cases of accusing falsely to obtain meritorious distinction; or as in cases of accusing falsely of rebellion.

As to the simple People, they by no means serve irregular Gods,* nor secret prohibited books; but the Police officers seize them in order to extort money. Let the superior officers

* The Chinese have not any word which answers to our term superstition; nor do they call the doctrines which they prohibit "false," but Seay, "deviating from rectitude, depraved." All that the Ancient Sages and the existing Government do not sanction is, "Denominated Seay."

be required to make strict enquiry, and punish this severely. If it be discovered that they have not examined, let them be punished as in cases of conniving at the illegal acts of household officers. Thus, real criminals will not escape the net; and the good and virtuous People will enjoy repose. Thus Heaven will be moved to confer harmony and peace; and still more, shall we look up to the Holy Sovereign's happiness in the enjoyment of true peace. With the most profound respect, I submit my simple notions to the decision of your Majesty.

Reply—"The report is recorded."

THE Tartar troops, who were brought from beyond the walls of China, against the rebels of Shan-tung, seized a considerable number of boys and girls, belonging to the inhabitants, and carried them away in the character of slaves. The troops returning from victory, high in the esteem of the Emperor, were ordered to halt at Peking, a month or two, to rest and enjoy themselves, before their return to Tartary. During their stay, an individual reported to His Majesty, the affair of male and female Children of the inhabitants of Shan-tung, having been dragged from their homes. He immediately set his face against it, and had severe laws enacted to punish similar proceedings in future. The following is one of the papers which he published on the occasion.



PEKING GAZETTE.

Kea-king, 18th Year, 3d Moon, 17th Day.

MARCH 6, 1814.



The following Imperial Edict, has been respectfully received.

GOVERNMENT is under a necessity of using the Army as an instrument by which to destroy rapacious anarchy, and by which to tranquillize the virtuous and good.* The leaders of the Army

* The European reader may consider these official documents as

should exterminate only the heads of rebellion, and seize the more active partizans; but should not injure even the down of the autumnal flower, that they may render venerable and respected martial law. Originally, it is the business of the Magistrates and Police to seize and punish insurgents; but, in consequence of the crowds of men assembled, it was indispensably necessary to call forth the strength of the Army in order to reduce them speedily. This is the great punishment inflicted by the State, and which, arranged in the fields of the Country, has no other intention than to reduce the guilty.

The leaders of the Army ought to know this fully, and should keep the Military under restraint, that the good and virtuous People may sit in security and peace: then only can I be said to use the Army for the defence of the People. When victory is obtained, the families of the rebels are involved; but the Sons and Daughters of the suffering People ought to be supported and treated kindly by the District officers. If the Government troops in the hour of victory, are allowed to carry away in crowds the

data, on which to form an idea of the opinions of the Chinese, but not of their practices, for their is no nation in the world in which professions and practice are more at variance than in China.

Children of the People, is not this enabling the residue of the rebels to escape the net, whilst the Children of good subjects are taken away remote from their houses, and ranked amongst slaves? How do their circumstances differ from those of prisoners taken from the enemy? This is very far from realizing my gracious intentions.

During the recent affair, I repeatedly sent down orders to restrain the Soldiers from plundering, but it never entered into my calculation, that they would take away with them the Children of the People. I acknowledge my fault, and reprove myself. Whether the Commander in Chief, and the Generals be ashamed or not, let them in the silence of night lay their hands upon their hearts and enquire. If the affair be still passed over, the crime will be greater.

It would now be proper to punish both officers and men according to their offence, but in consideration of their having so speedily brought the affair to a close; and their not being previously cautioned against the crime which they have committed, it is ordered, that indulgence be shewn to them, and that the punishment of one and all be remitted.

Respect this.

Directions were then given to find out the Parents of the young Persons carried away, in order to their being restored.

The tenor of the Imperial Edicts, unquestionably shews the reigning Emperor to be a humane man. This is also the character which his People give him ; but they complain, that he keeps in the Government a bad set.

TANG-KAOU ;

Or Ascending the Hills on the 9th Day of the 9th Moon.

IT is said, that during the Dynasty Tsin, a certain Person had a supernatural intimation made to him, that some great calamity would occur on the Plain before morning. Having received this intimation, he, together with his family, old and young, ascended a neighbouring mountain, and remained over night. In the morning, to his astonishment, he found that the inhabitants of the Plain, together with the domestic animals, had all perished.

In commemoration of this event, annually, on the ninth day of the ninth moon, large crowds of People throughout the whole Empire ascend the hills ; they call it "Avoiding Judgments." The Paper-kites of the Chinese, are on that day taken to the hills and let fly away ; under the idea, that they give at once their kites and their cares to the wind. After that day, the amusement of kite-flying is discontinued till the ensuing season.

It was affirmed, last year, that the Emperor's return to his Palace, was delayed by his observing this holiday ; and, that he, thereby escaped the immediate consequences of the rebellion which broke out on the fifteenth of the ninth moon,

THE FOLLOWING LINES

BY TOO-MO,

HAVE AN ALLUSION TO THE TANG-KAOU,



WHEN the autumnal rivers receive the shadow of the first flying
Swallow ;

Let us, companions, take the bottle and ascend the lofty moun-
tain.

In this impure world, 'tis difficult to meet with a mouth open
laughing ;

Let us (to-day) with the Keü flower, decorate our heads and
return.

We'll get merrily drunk, and keep up this happy season ;

'Tis in vain to ascend the hill, and sigh about the sun setting.

Old times have passed away, the present come, and still it is thus ;
What's the use of (like the man of Cow-hill*) staining our gar-
ments with tears.

The following is the Original Ode.

* Referring to a Person named Tse-king-kung.

九日齊山登高

杜牧

江涵秋影雁初飛
與客攜壺上翠微
塵世難逢開口笑
菊花須挿滿頭歸
但將酩酊酬佳節
不用登臨歎落暉
古往今來只如此
牛山何必淚沾衣

THE COUNTRY COTTAGE.

BY HE-HWAN.



HE, himself, cut the Sō,* and wove the garment for rain ;
 The smoke on the Southern hill discovers the door of his cot ;
 The hill-wife† soon announces, “ Well boild are the pears ; ”
 The Children roam distant to meet him from the pea-field
 returning.

In the shaded lake, the fish frisk on the watery mirror ;
 The birds revert to the green turfsted-hill, and brush flying about.
 In the season of flowers, crowds of men will be going and
 returning.

O ! could I purchase Yen-kwang’s‡ retired stone in the brook,
 where of old he angled.

* Leaf of which the Chinese make a kind of cloak, worn by husbandmen, watermen, and others.

† Rustic.

‡ A Person famous during the Dynasty Han, who retired from Court to a Country life.

樓與三

SAN-YU-LOW:

OR THE

THREE DEDICATED ROOMS.

A TALE,

TRANSLATED FROM THE CHINESE.

BY J. F. DAVIS, ESQ.

OF THE HONBLE. COMPANY'S CHINA ESTABLISHMENT.

CANTON, CHINA:

PRINTED BY ORDER OF THE SELECT COMMITTEE;

At the Honorable East India Company's Press,

BY P. P. THOMS.

1815.

SAN-YU-LOW;

OR THE

THREE DEDICATED ROOMS.



SECTION I.

ARGUMENT.

“ THE GARDEN AND PAVILION ARE SOLD BEFORE THEY ARE
FINISHED. THE PURCHASERS GREEDILY DESIRE TO POSSESS
THE WHOLE PROPERTY.

THE ODE SAYS,*

“ MY House, having changed its owner, now belongs to a rich
“ man.
“ I therefore bundle my kint† and my books under my arm, and
“ go over to another village,

* Translation of the lines at the commencement of the story.

† A musical instrument, common among the Chinese.

“ The lofty rooms, which I built myself, I myself dispose of;
 “ Unwilling to ruin my posterity, by leaving them such extensive
 “ possessions.”

AGAIN,

“ Within the period of an hundred years, it must have belonged
 “ to some other person;
 “ And it is surely better to sell it while new, than when become
 “ old.
 “ The pine trees, the bamboos, and the Mei flowers must enter
 “ the account;
 “ But my kin and my books, my dogs and my chickens, shall
 “ accompany me.
 “ The scraps* of old verses stuck against the walls;—for these
 “ he may fix his price.
 “ For the wet weather clothes,† hanging without, it is not worth
 “ while to bargain.

* It is usual in Private Houses to have labels suspended against the walls, on which are inscribed moral sentences, or verses from the ancient books. These are generally very obscure in their import.

† The Chinese in rainy weather, use a sort of cloke, made of the leaves of some vegetable, from which the rain runs off, as if

“ Hereafter, when I may perhaps come, during my leisure, to
 “ pay a visit;
 “ The former master will be called the honored guest.”

THE above detached lines, together with the regular Stanza, were composed by an eminent Person, in the Dynasty of Ming, who sold his House and built another. Selling one's House, however, is a troublesome sort of business; it cannot sufficiently be regretted. What is there of pleasure in it, that a man should compose all sorts of verses and rhymes on such a subject?

If you wish to know the nature of Property in this world, it is altogether transitory. There is no river or hill which remains unchanged for a thousand years; but there is not a House which remains unsold for an hundred. If you give it into the hands of your Children and Grand-children, they will deliver to other Persons with its value diminished. It is better oneself to seek a Purchaser, before it is altogether destroyed; then if you cannot sell it for its price, you still leave behind you the reputation of liberality. It will be said, “ He knew well enough it was expen-

from a thatched roof, and completely shelters what is under. It is to these garments that the text alludes

sive, and therefore let it go cheap. He did it as a favour; it was not that he was taken in." If, on the contrary, your Children or Grand-children happen to sell it low, there soon arise plenty of discussions. It is said, "He has wasted the patrimony of his Fathers; and is undutiful. He has dismembered what his Ancestors loved; and is wicked. He knows not the difficulty of laying the foundation of a fortune; he is a fool. These three bad names, are all that his Ancestors, who founded the family, and accumulated the Property, have delivered down to him. It is better to have not a single brick left you. Though the man, who has not enough land to stick an awl into, is the cause of his posterity acquiring their fortune with empty hands, they still obtain the credit of not having had an inch of ground as a step towards it. Those men, therefore, who are Fathers and Grand-fathers, when they have arrived at the end of their days, should turn round their heads and give a look at those who are coming after them. If, upon examination, they appear by their conduct to be unworthy Children, it is better to get rid of the Property at once; thus preventing their becoming the Prodigal Sons of a Frugal Father, and receiving the ridicule of mankind.

From Ancient times down to the present, of those Persons who have been particularly eminent for such good sense, there have been only two. The one was named Tang-yew; the other

Yu-shin.* They, seeing that their Sons were degenerate, and that afterwards, their Property must inevitably be given up to other Persons in a ruined state, thought it better to dispose of it with their own hands. There are still two lines of an old Ode, which allude to this,—they say,

“ Give splendid arms to grace the Soldier’s side;

“ Give paints and patches to the beauteous bride.”

If their posterity, they thought, disposed of it for them, it was most probable that they would not find a good receiver. Most inevitably one would contend and another tug, until they fought about it. To say nothing about their Sons and Wives having no place to live in, their very graves and tombs would not be secure from disturbance. If such then is the case with those who possess the Empire, how much more so with the common People.

I am now going to speak of one Person, who was eminent for sense, and of another, who was deficient; that they may serve as

* These are the names of two famous Emperors, the eighth and ninth from Fo-hi, the founder of the Monarchy. The former of these two, after having reigned upwards of seventy years, resigned the throne to the latter; or, at least made him an associate in the Empire with himself. The latter again left the Empire out of his own family.

examples to the world. The patrimony of these two Persons could not be compared to a tile on Tang-yew's house, or to a brick on Yu-shin's wall. But why do I, in speaking of these two inferior men, make use of such a lofty comparison? The reason is, because of these two, the surname of one was Tang, of the other, Yu. Every one said, they were the descendants of Tang-yew, and Yu-shin; that they took the national appellation of those Emperors for their surnames; and that they were descended in a line from them. I therefore borrow the Ancestors in delineating the Descendants, in order to do justice to the original source.

The sensible man, had all his Ancestor's disposition; the stupid fellow, had very little of the character of his Family. They mutually diverged from each other, as the Heavens from the Abyss. How dissimilar branches sprung from the same stem, will be perceived.

During the reign of Kea-tsing,* of the Dynasty of Ming; in the Province of Sze-chuen, the Foo † of Ching-too, and the Höen of Ching-too; there lived a rich man in increasing circum-

* The eleventh Emperor of this Dynasty. He ascended the throne about the year 1521.

† The Foo, is a division of the Province, or Seng; and the Höen of the Foo.

stances. His surname was Tang; his epithet, Yo-chuen. This man had an immense quantity of land. Whenever he got any money, he delighted only in buying fields and purchasing ground. But he would build no Houses; and of those Family utensils which are in constant use, he would not buy one too many. With regard to Clothes and Food, they had no weight with him. His disposition was to make money by all sorts of means. As to his extensive property in rich lands, no sooner did they enter into his possession, than the profits came in. They increased daily as the Moon towards her plenitude. Houses and Furniture, (he thought,) are not only unprofitable, but there is a fear lest the God* of fire should destroy them, and in a moment they should become annihilated. If all the family have fine garments, there immediately come unpleasant fellows to borrow clothes. If there are plenty of victuals, one soon has People claiming acquaintance, and taking their seats in quest of food. There is nothing like being contented with coarse articles; People in that case will not be begging them.

He took fast hold of this idea, and, in addition to not buying any thing but Houses, would not spend a Canda-reen* or a Cash. The state of his mind being thus, he could

* Hwuy-lō, the spirit which is supposed to preside over fire.

+ These are the European names for the Fuen and Le. The for-

not be at rest with his niggardliness, but wanted also to steal a great name. He said, that he was descended from the Emperor Tang-yew; and that his Ancestors had great celebrity. That they lived in a thatched house with mud steps;—that what they lived upon was broth and Yuen wine;—that they used earthen jars and pots;—and that their garments were of cloth and deer skins. The Father being thus economical, his Son could not but obey his precepts. People seeing him (the Father) parsimonious in the extreme, began to scrutinize him behind his back, saying; “There is an ancient Proverb, which says, ‘If a man is very Economical, he must have a Prodigal Son.’ He must inevitably have a successor who will turn things upside down; so that Tang’s disposition to save will not descend.” Unexpectedly, however, the Son imitated his Father. From his earliest years he commenced a scholar, seeking preferment by all sorts of means; and was a Titular Sew-tsae.* In his eating and drinking, he did not seek for luxury; in his clothes he wished not for a superabundance; in his

mer is one hundredth part of the Leang, or ounce of silver; and the latter, one tenth of the former, or one thousandth part of the Leang.

* The lowest literary title. The next above it, is Kiu-jin; and the next above that, Tsin-sze. The three first of the Tsin-sze, at each examination, which is always conducted by the Emperor himself, are called Chang-yuen, Tan-hwa, and Pang-yen.

instruments of amusement, he did not aim at the best. It was only on the subject of Houses that he differed from his other desires. There, indeed, he was not contented with economy. To look at the House in which he lived, it was like any rich man's necessary. He was quite ashamed of it. He wanted to be building fine Houses; but was afraid to begin, lest the means could not be obtained. He had heard People say, that to buy an Old house was better than to build a New one; therefore, in a consultation with his Father, he said, "If we can buy a handsome House, which will be fit for us to live in, we may then look for a Garden, and build a Library in it, such as may suit our wish." Yō-chuen, desiring much to become a Fung-keun,* wished only to flatter his Son, and, without being aware, deviated from his constant opinion. He said in answer, "There is no necessity to be in a hurry; in this street is a handsome House and Garden. It is not yet completely built; but the day of its being finished must inevitably be the day of its sale; you and I will just wait a while." The Son said, "When People want to sell Houses, they do not build: when they build Houses, they do not intend to sell them. Where is the probability that, when they have finished building, they in-

* The Fathers of Persons possessing eminent rank are thus called.

tend to sell the House?" Yo-chuen said, "Pray where did you get that crochet? The man who possesses ten thousand pieces of gold may build a House which costs him only one thousand. But if a man's possessions in Houses and Lands are half and half, he may be said to be a large tree without a root, which must inevitably be blown down when the wind comes. Then how much more may this man, who, without possessing an hundred acres in land, suddenly builds a house with a thousand rooms, be called a tree without a root? He truly will not wait for the wind's blowing, but will tumble down of himself! How can there be any question about it?"

The Son, hearing these words, said, that they were very true; and, as before, accorded with his Father. He went seeking only for Land, and did not come to ask about Houses. He wished that the other man would soon have finished building; in order that the present owner being gone, he might give the finishing stroke instead of him. The rich man's plans proved successful: the result justified his words. There are two lines of the "She-king," which are applicable to the case.

"The nest one bird constructs with anxious toil,
" 'Ere long another seizes as her spoil."

He, who was building the House, was descended from Chung-

hwa. His surname was Yu, his name Haou, and his epithet Soo-chin. He was one who delighted in reading books of Poetry; but did not seek to be an eminent Scholar. From the indolence of his disposition, he had a great aversion to any office; and was not cut out for being a Mandarin. He therefore detached his thoughts from a great name, and entirely gave himself up to odes and wine; and by these means could not but be reduced to beggary.

During his whole life he had scarcely any other delight than in arranging and building Gardens and Summer Houses. From the beginning of the year to the end, not a day passed without his advancing the work. The House which he was now building, he wished to be of the highest perfection, and not of the common order; he said, "Let other men have their fine fields and their numerous acres: Pleasures and riches were the concerns of others; on him they had no influence." There were only three things in which he truly took an interest, and which he was determined to have of the best quality. These three were, the House which he inhabited in the day, the Bed in which he slept at night, and the Coffin in which he was to be laid up after death. Having these ideas in his breast,* he went on with the work of

* The Chinese suppose the belly to be the seat of ideas.

earth* and wood, labouring continually at it in an indefatigable manner.

Tang-Yō-chuen's Son, having waited several years without seeing him finish the business, was a little vexed and angry at heart; and said to his Father, "Why have we waited such a long time? That man's House is not yet finished, nor is his money yet expended. From this it would appear that he is a fellow of ways and means. With regard to the business of his selling it hereafter, that seems to be a little uncertain." Yō-chuen replied, "Every day later makes it a day more certain; and each day make it more advantageous for us. These is no occasion for you to fret about it. The reason why his House is not finished, is merely this; when it is completed, the appearance does not hit his wish; and he wants to take it to pieces, in order to build again. If it is excellent, he seeks for still higher excellence; so that of every day, during which it is delayed, the alterations and improvements are wholly for our own advantage. The reason of his money not being completely wasted is, because the usurers and the workmen, see-

* The Chinese Houses are built, in a great measure, of mud. Hence a Bricklayer is called, Ne shwüy tscang, "earth and water workman."

ing he is building it very high, wishing to take* and lend to him on credit. The labourers do not sue him for their food and debts, because (they think) that by every additional day of work they get a day's wages; while, if they were to press him hard, he would certainly stop the work for a couple of days, and they would have no employment. It is thus that his money is not all expended. This may be called 'taking flesh to feed an ulcer.' It is not that he is possessed of ways and means. When he has arrived at the period when he can draw together no more, those Persons who have him in their books, will inevitably press him all together, and begin to curse him. There is no fear that he will not seek, in the first place, to sell what he has in Land; and as that will not suffice to pay them, he will certainly think about his House. If he now begins to collect, at an early period, while his debts are not large, he can wait for a good price in order to sell it, and therefore will not let it go cheap. The right way will be to wait till a later day, when his debts are a little increased; and, anxious to sell, he will be willing to come down with the terms. This is all the very making of us; Why go and obstinately fret about it?"

* Such is the phrase in the original, Pa ho wǒ shé ta, "to take things and lend to him."

The Son hearing this, still more applauded and acquiesed. Indeed, after a few years, Yu-soo-chin's debts by degrees accumulated, and his creditors every day came before his doors to claim them; and there were some who would not go away again. The House which he was building could not be finished; and he at last wanted to seek a man to buy it.

All those, who are selling Houses, are differently circumstanced from the venders of Lands. They must necessarily wish to find out a purchaser in some neighbouring situation, that he may have either his foundations contiguous, or his windows opposite. If some distant person wishes to buy, he will want to enquire of those in the neighbourhood. Should the neighbours utter a word of disadvantage, he, who wanted to purchase, will not be willing to do it. Not like Lands, or Hills, or Fish Ponds, in the midst of an empty desert, which any one can manage. Therefore in selling a House, it is certainly desireable to sell to some one in the neighbourhood.

Tang-yō-chuen was a monied man; it would not do to trifle with him. The People of the House of course went to ask him first. Both the Father and Son, though at their hearts they greedily coveted it, merely returned for answer, that "They did not want it." They waited till he entreated them earnestly; and then went over,—just to give a look. As if disliking it, they said,

that " He had built it but indifferently. The Apartments were not fit for a Gentleman; and the winding avenues would only impede business. The fine carved doors, when they were required to keep out thieves, would have no strength. Rooms, which should be different, were like each other. The ground and the air were very damp. No wonder that it would fetch no money. The flowers and bamboos were like plantations of mulberry* and hemp. Those, who came to saunter here, must inevitably be constantly served with wine and eatables. Such a House as this was fit only to be turned into a Nunnery, or a Jos-houset†. If one wished to make inner apartments for one's Children, it would never do."

Yu-soo-chin had during his whole life spent his heart's blood upon it; and now, seeing that it did not obtain approbation, but

* Mulberry trees are usually grown in China, solely for the purpose of rearing silkworms, and are therefore young plants, not exceeding the height of a common-sized shrub. This comparison in the text, probably alludes to the quantity of the flowers, &c.

† The names in the original, are Gan-tang, and Sze-yuen, the former meaning the residences for Female bonzes; and the latter, for the Male priests of the religion of Fó; which are called by Europeans, Jos-houses.

that they shewed a dislike and contempt * towards it, was not altogether pleased. But, as besides this man there was no one who could buy the House, it was as well not to quarrel with him.

The People present advised Yō-chuen not to say too much against it. The price altogether was not high; and even if he took it to pieces and built it again, it would pay for the workmen and their maintenance. Yō-chuen and his Son of course praised and dispraised it, till they brought it down to an exceeding low price; not above one fifth of the value.

Yu-soo-chin had no alternative; and must bear the pain of selling it. State Rooms, Pavilions, and Fish Ponds, were all delivered over in the bonds. There was only one set of rooms which he had been at all his life, and had brought exactly to hit his taste. This he would not write down in the bonds, but wanted to build a partition wall, and make another entrance, in order that he might inhabit it till his death.

The Son decidedly wanted to force him to sell it altogether, in order that it might be complete. Yō-chuen seemed to agree with

* The original Chü-pe, may be translated literally, by “protrudere podicem.”

the rest of the people. Screwing up his mouth, he said, “ Let him sell it, or not sell it; where is the use of forcing him? He only wishes to keep this small shred,* that it may be the means of recovering the Property hereafter, when he has improved his circumstances. It will then, as of old, revert to its original master, which will be a very good thing.” When the People heard this, they all said that it was the speech of a benevolent man. How should they know that it was far otherwise; that it was altogether the language of contempt! He concluded that it could never be recovered, and therefore left him this shred. Indeed it was quite useless; and the whole must inevitably become one House; the only difference being, whether sooner or later. He therefore listened to his requisitions, and entirely accorded with him in words. Accordingly they took the whole House and divided it into two compartments. The new master obtained nine parts; and the old possessor, one.

It seems that these few Studies were in the style of a Pa-

* In the original it is literally Sien, a shred. There is some law existing in China, that if a man, in selling his property, retains but a small portion of it, he is entitled to receive back the whole; if hereafter his improved circumstances will allow of his redeeming it. This observation may serve to explain his motive in wishing to retain this shred.

goda, consisting altogether of three stories. In each story was a tablet, written upon by eminent Persons, all of whom he could name. In the lowest Room were carved lattices, crooked railings, bamboo seats, and flower-stands. It was the place where he received People. Upon the front of the tablet were written four characters to this effect;

"DEDICATED TO MEN."

The middle story had bright tables and clear windows; with some toothpicks and pictures. It was the place where he was accustomed to read and write. Upon the tablet were four characters, saying;

"DEDICATED TO THE ANCIENTS."

The highest story was empty and light. There was nothing besides a chafing dish for incense, and a sacred book. This was where he retreated from the crowd, retired from noise, divided himself from men, and shut out example.* On the front of the tablet were four characters to this effect;

"DEDICATED TO HEAVEN."

* This may appear like tautology, but it a literal translation, of the original. A great deal of such repetition prevails in Chinese writing.

Having divided the building into compartments for these three different uses, he likewise took them unitedly, and formed a tablet, calling them;

“THE THREE DEDICATED ROOMS.”

Before he had parted with the rest of his Property, those three appellations, though well chosen, were still vainly applied. The Rooms had not yet been really made use of. The lowest Apartment only could be excepted; for as he was exceedingly fond of guests, and, if a Person from a distance visited him, immediately placed a bed in it, the appellation of, “Dedicated to men,” was certainly applicable. As to the two upper Apartments, he had not hitherto been in them. Now that his Summer Houses were gone, besides the Apartment “Dedicated to the Ancients,” he had no place to read or write in; and, except that “Dedicated to Heaven,” no place to which he could retire from noise, or retreat from the crowd. All the day long he sat in them, and the names which he had dictated, became truly applicable. He then fully understood, that in a small House a great deal might be done; and that it was better to despise the name and assume the reality. These four popular lines are not inapplicable,

“ Lord of ten thousand acres, blooming fair,
“ A few small morsels quell thy appetite ;
“ A thousand spreading roofs demand thy care,
“ And, lo ! six feet suffice thee ev’ry night.”

Hitherto the little stength which he had possessed, had all been dissipated in vain. He henceforth applied his enterprising and extensively operating genius, collectively at a single point; and caused these Apartments to be decorated to an extraordinary degree. Residing in the midst of them, Yu-soo-chin not only did not feel the misery of parting with his garden, being, on the contrary, very much relieved by the absence of that burden; but also did not suffer from a violent neighbour at his side. How he could live securely in this habitation, will be shewn in the next Section, where it is explained.

SECTION II.

ARGUMENT.

“NEITHER A HARBOURER OF THIEVES, NOR HIMSELF A THIEF,
HE SUDDENLY ATTAINS TO THE POSSESSION OF A LARGE HOARD.
BOTH THE PROPERTY AND ITS INHABITANTS REVERT TO THE
ORIGINAL MASTER.”

AFTER Yō-chuen and his Son had bought the pleasure ground, the rich man's taste unavoidably proved different from that of the former owner; and he wanted to alter it once again. But it was not necessary to transpose the beams, or to change the pillars; and make it altogether unlike its former appearance. It was like a handsome landscape, where the only thing requisite was to add a blade of grass, or take away a tree. The appearance did not suit his idea of a picture. When he had worked at it for a time, he found that he had missed his original intention of turning iron into gold, and, contrary to his expectation, was turning gold into iron.

The Persons who came to see it, all said that, "This Pleasure ground was large and unsuitable. That, after all, it was not to be compared with those Studies ; though if they were united, it would be well enough. That it was no wonder the other retained the small part and despised the large one ; or that he held it tenaciously, and would not sell it. That the partition turned out to be that of one inch of gold to ten cubits of iron."

Yō-chuen and his Son, hearing these sayings, inadvertently became angry and repentant of the bargain ; they then knew that a man may be rich, and yet not comfortable. They applied to the Brokers,* and going over to annoy him, required that he should insert it in the deeds, and give the whole over to them. Yo-soo-chin, since selling the pleasure grounds, had employed no workmen, and had certainly not been extravagant. As he owed no private debts, and was short neither of money nor food, how should he wish to sell his property ? He therefore said to them in answer, " When this habitation was gone, tell me where I should repose myself ? But if you should even cause me to be short of sustenance and destitute of clothing, I will still hold out." How

* "The middle men," would be a more literal translation of the original " Yuen chung ;" but it means precisely the same as Brokers in English.

much more determined was he now, when his circumstances were improved.

The Brokers came over and spoke about it to Yō-chuen's Son. He could not help taking his Father to task, and said, that "He had been all his life time studying men, but had, on this occasion, for once not formed a right judgment." Yō-chuen answered, "That fellow may be violent while he is a live, but he cannot be violent after he is dead. He is now rather an old man, and without heirs. When the breath is out of his body, all his wives, mistresses, and servants, will inevitably revert to others. How much more then, these few rooms. The whole family, and all that they carry with them, will come over to us; there is no fear of their flying away up to Heaven." The Son hearing this said, that "Though his words were true, still this man's duration seemed to be without limit: there was no waiting for him; and the sooner they got the whole of the Property the better." From this time hence, they made Yu-soo-chin * the chief subject of their thoughts, and did not so much curse him that he might die soon, as they hoped that

* Pa Yu-soo-chin fang tsae sin tow, "They took Yu-soo-chin, and placed him on the top of their hearts."

he would soon become poor ; for when he had arrived at the period when he should be short of sustenance and destitute of clothing, (they thought) he certainly could not hold out.

Who could have conceived that, when men had such virtuous wishes, Heaven would not accord with them ! He not only did not become impoverished, with all their hoping ; but also did not die, in spite of all their cursing. On the contrary, he hereafter grew stronger as he became older. He was neither troubled with a want of clothes, nor did his subsistence fail him ; and he had no necessity to sell his Apartments.

Yō-chuen and his Son were enraged and vexed beyond measure ; and concerted a plan. They went over and applied to the Brokers, insisting that he should redeem back the whole. They said, “ Two families cannot live in one garden. Exalted in his Dedicated Rooms on high, he looks down upon that Summer House of ours. He can see into our Private Rooms, while we cannot view his Women’s Apartments. This unequal sort of business will never answer.”

Yu-soo-chin heard these words, but knew that their wish to be off the bargain was feigned, and that the real truth was, they gre-

dily desired to get the whole. He repeated his former words, and returned a sharp and decisive answer.*

Yō-chuen and his Son were exceedingly angry, and it only remained for them to oppress him with the Mandarin's power. They wrote a document, announcing, in open hall, their wish to undo the bargain ; hoping that, by a little bribery, they might buy over and manage the Mandarin, and through him, get the whole Property.

They little thought, that that officer was incorruptible ; that he had formerly been a poor Scholar, and had been cheated and insulted by a Person of Property. He said, " That is an indigent man ; how, then, can he redeem it ? Your's is evidently a plot to ruin and devour him. You are Persons of Property, and want to be rich without being virtuous ; I, who am a Magistrate, wish to be virtuous without being rich." Then in open hall, he rebuked them for a while ; and tearing up the deed, turned them both out.

Yu-soo-chin had a friend, bound to him by the first principles of honor. He was a man from a distant part of the country, and

* Chan ting, tsiě tiě, che hwüy fō, " a chop-nail, clip-iron answer."

possessed great wealth. It was his delight to make light of riches in performing acts of benevolence. He happened one day to come and converse with Yu-soo-chin. Seeing that he had sold his Garden and Pavilion, he heaved a deep sigh. When he heard also, that Persons had been plotting against him, and that he could not live securely even in this little nest, but must hereafter give it up entirely, he wanted immediately to produce the money and redeem it for Yu-soo-chin.

The latter was a man unequalled for his independent spirit. To say nothing of his unwillingness to put another to inconvenience for some hundreds or thousands; if a man offered him but one tale or five mace,* without shewing he had some claim to it, he would refuse to accept it. Having heard what his friend had to say, he told him, that his warm-heartedness was all in vain. He was mistaken in his view of the subject. Of the possessions of this world, where was that which remained a thousand years without being sold. One might indeed take care of it during life time; but there was no securing it after death. "Though now (said he) you interest yourself in my cause, and advance large sums of money

* The European names for the Leang, or Chinese ounce of silver, and its decimal part, the Fuen.

to redeem a small portion of it, I cannot live above a few years; and some of these days, when I die without Heirs, every brick and tile of it must revert to other Persons. Though now, from a generous motive, you are willing to make light of your money, I am afraid that you cannot assist me twice. Though now, alas! you may redeem the Property for me, wait till a little while hence, and you cannot be of any service to my ghost." The friend, seeing that he assumed this mode of plain thinking, was unwilling to press him.

He lodged with him several nights in the "Three Dedicated Rooms;" and afterwards, when he took leave, in order to return home, addressed Yu-soo-chin thus, previous to commencing his journey, "At night, while I was reposing in the lowest Room, I perceived a white rat, which ran about, and then suddenly darted into the floor. Some wealth is, no doubt, concealed there. On no account sell this House to any one. A little time hence you may, perhaps, dig up some treasure; but I will not say positively." Yu-soo-chin, hearing these words, only gave a sort of cold laugh, and said, "Thank ye;" they then separated.

The old saying says well, that "No wealth even fell by chance to him, whose destiny was to be poor." It is only the wealthy Purchasers of Houses who dig up hidden treasures. There never yet

has been seen a Person selling his Property, who has found half a
vile Cash* in his own ground. Yu-soo-chin was a knowing man;
how should he have the folly to indulge any such ideas? Hence,
when he had heard what his friend had to say, he merely gave a
sort of cold laugh; and did not begin to rout up the bricks and
dig the earth.

Yō-chuen and his Son, since they had experienced the Mandarin's
wrath, had let shame succeed to resentment. They were still more
busy with their plots; and hoped that Yu-soo-chin would soon die;
that he whole soon become a lonesome ghost. They might then
enter his house with a good face,

Who could have thought, that when a rich man had been right
in all his conjectures, there should only be the two circumstances
of life and death, which would not acknowledge his controul?
Yu-soo-chin not only did not die, but having arrived at upwards
of sixty years, became suddenly quite brisk, and got a Son.

There immediately came great numbers of congratulatory guests,
and assembled in the "Three Dedicated Rooms." They all said,

* See Note, page 7.

that "Now was the opportunity to get back the Property." When Yō-chuen and his Son heard of the event, they were very much disturbed. They were, before, only afraid of not obtaining a portion, but, now, were apprehensive that they should lose the whole; and were anxious beyond measure.

After a month had elapsed, there unexpectedly came over to them several Brokers, saying, that "Yu-soo-chin, after the birth of his Son, had been reduced to poverty by his guests; they had eaten his salt clean and his vinegar dry.* He had now no means of subsistence left, and could only think of the House he lived in. He had issued the cards for selling it, and the bills were all on the doors. They ought not to let slip this opportunity, but should pounce upon it as quick as possible."

When Yō-chuen and his Son heard this, they were mad with joy. Their only apprehension was, that he would remember and hate them for the circumstances which were passed; that he would prefer selling it to some other Person, and would not wish to have any dealings with them.

* Expression in the original. We should say, "They had completely eaten him up."

They little thought that Yu-soo-chin's way of thinking was altogether different from their own. He said, "The Descendants of the two families of Tang and Yu, are very different from those of others. His Ancestor, Te-yao, conferred the Empire on my Fore-father, who had nothing to give in recompence. Now, since the obligation has descended to his posterity, to take this small Property, and bestow it for nothing, would not be improper : how much more, then, when I get a price for it. I will not, for a little resentment of the present day, obliterate the great favours of former times. Tell him not to be anxious ; just let him trust to me to fix some small price for it, and give it over to him altogether."

Yō-chuen, as well as his Son, when he heard of this, was happy beyond measure. He said, "I always delighted in dwelling upon my Ancestors, and have ever received their favourable influence. If it had not been for their Ancient generosity, how should I have obtained this magnificent residence. Thus it is, that men may rejoice in having virtuous Fore-fathers!" He then went over with the Brokers, and settled the bargain. He had hitherto delighted in seeking for an advantage ; but now, when old things had been brought forward, he wished to confer the obligations to the last. Yu-soo-chin, on the other hand, did not higgle about it ; but imitated Yō-chuen's Ancestor, who had given up his throne and his

kingdom ; and accordingly sought some thatched Cottage, in which he might live, having parted with the whole of the concern.

There were a few honest friends who could not justify Yu-soo-chin. They said, " When you had your House, where was the objection to selling it to some other Person, that you should wish to dispose of it to him, who envied and plotted against you. He has now succeeded ; and both Father and Son will go about to every one, chattering and exulting. Before you had a Son, you would not abate in your resentment. Now that you had got a Son, he might have proved a foundation for recovering the whole ; and even though you had not recovered it, that which you have, would have sufficed. Why then take the possessions, which remained to you, and give them over to Yō-chuen ? "

Yu-soo-chin, having heard what they had to say, gave a sort of laugh, and then said in answer, " Your intentions, Gentlemen, are very good ; but you regard merely what is before your eyes, without considering the hereafter. I judge that his plans will eventually benefit me. If I had wanted to redeem the whole Property, I must have waited till my Son was grown up. When he had arrived at manhood, it might then have been possible to get it all back. I, however, am an old man, and conceive that I cannot last until he is grown up ; and who can tell, that after my

death, my Son would not have sold it to Yō-chuen. Having waited till the Son had parted with it, he would then have laughed at, and abused the Father. It is better that the Father should sell the Property, and then People will compassionate the Son.

" But even this would have been but a small matter. It is ten thousand to one, that I shall soon have died; and my Son would not have been grown up. My Wife, being content to strive with hunger, would not have parted with the Property to Yō-chuen. He, seeing that the New would not come into his hands, and fearing, also, that the Old might be redeemed, would inevitably have laid plots to cut off my Heir. Thus, I am fearful that, not only the Property would not have been recovered, but my Son also would have been sacrificed. This indeed might be called a loss! By selling it cheap to him now, I have merely deposited a part with him, and have made him incur a debt which will be paid into the hands of my Son. If he does not pay it, there are others who will. The old Proverb says, " To endure injuries is the sure policy."

Having heard him thus far, the People, though they were a little startled, said, " That he was very unsafe." Yu-soo-chin unexpectedly died a few years after having sold the Property; and left his Son, a child, under the protection of his Widow, who pos-

sessed scarcely any thing. Their sole reliance was on the price of the House, which produced a little interest, just enough to subsist upon. Tang-yō-chuen's possessions became every day greater. He knew how to make money, and his Son knew how to take care of it. Every thing came in : nothing went out. The Property which he had bought was so secure, that it might last for a thousand years. Every one arraigned the wisdom of Heaven, saying, "The descendants of those Persons, who were liberal and just, had little or nothing ; while the progeny of those, who enriched their families by unworthy means, were able to heap up riches." The saying, however, of the Ancients is very true, "That when virtue and vice have arrived at their full, they must finally be recompensed ; the only difference being, whether soon or late." These words are constantly in mens' mouths, but leave very little impression on their hearts. If the recompence comes late, it is just the same as if it came early ; and doubtless his lot, who waits for it, is the worst.

If you wish to understand the subject of late and early recompences, it very much resembles laying out money and receiving the interest. If you receive it back one day sooner, you receive one day's less interest. If you leave it for one year more, you receive one year's additional interest. If you look for a recompence with an anxious heart, Heaven will not conclude the

matter with you ; and it will appear as if there were no recompense. Heaven will wait till you have lost all expectation, and, when you have utterly given up the idea, will then suddenly send it. Just as a bad debt of many years standing ; which, when the lender has entirely forgotten it, arrives unexpectedly at his door, with an exceedingly large accumulation of interest. How much superior in advantage to lending out and receiving it back immediately !

When Yu-soo-chin's Son had attained to the age of Seventeen or Eighteen, he suddenly acquired a literary title. His name was Yu-tsze-chin ; his epithet Ke-woo. He was created a Hœn, and being chosen to go to Peking, was raised to the office of Chang-ko. He was a man who dared to speak in the cause of rectitude, and became a great favourite with the Emperor Tsung.

At length when his mother became old, he requested leave to retire and support her. As he was making the best of his way home, and was some miles from it, he saw a woman, not much more than twenty, with a document in her hand, kneeling by the way side, and crying out aloud, “ I entreat that my Lord, Yu, will receive and examine this.” Ke-woo, told her to come into the boat,* and taking the deed, looked at it. It turned out to be

* Almost all journeys are performed in China by water.

in the name of her Husband, who wanted, with his family and effects, to come under his protection, and become his slaves. Ke-woo said to her, "By your appearance, you seem to be of a good family. Why do you wish to throw yourselves under my protection? Why, too, does your Husband not shew himself; but desire that you, a woman, should expose yourself, and come to the way side, crying out aloud?"

The woman said, "I am descended from an Ancient family; but my Father-in-law, during his life time, was fond of buying Lands; and every acre of Land, and every House which adjoined to his own, he always endeavoured to add to the stock. Those People, who parted with their Property, did not part with it willingly; but every one of them hated him in their hearts. Before my Father-in-law died, they happened, in the first place, to be favorable times, which prevented him from breaking in upon his wealth. Secondly, he was a Person of rank; and, therefore, if a Mandarin had any thing against him, it was only necessary to spend a little money, and he could still live unmolested. At length the favorable times no longer existed; and before half a year was over, my Father-in-law died. My husband was young, and likewise possessed no rank. Those persecutors of the Orphan and the Widow, rushed upon him all in a body, and all went before the Héen with charges against him; so that within a year, he experienced a great many different actions; and the larger half of his

Property was expended. But now there has befallen him a still greater evil, which is not yet got over. My Husband is at present in prison, and it is not money which will get him out. He, who can speak in his behalf, must be a Person of eminence. If such a Person concerns himself in his cause, and manages the business as if it were his own, he may then be liberated. He, who in this place, at present answers to this description, can only be your Lordship; besides which, this business has some relation to you. Although it is my Husband's cause, it is truly the same as if it were your Lordship's. He therefore wrote this letter, and directed me to come before you, and throw ourselves upon your support; presenting to you, all our Property and our Persons, and only entreating that your Lordship will not reject them as worthless, but accept of them as soon as possible."

Ke-woo hearing these words, could not overcome his surprise. He asked her, "What can that business be, which you have not yet got over, and which concerns me? Without doubt, while I have been absent from home, my slaves have been creating a piece of work, and, in conjunction with you and your husband, produced this evil. This has led you to throw yourselves upon my support. Do you want me to take in a parcel of strangers, to recognize them as belonging to a family of rank, and by protecting them, to incur guilt, through an unjust stretch of power?"

The Woman said, " It is by no means thus. In the midst of our place is a tall Building, called ' The Three Dedicated Rooms.' It was originally your Lordship's Property ; but was sold away. We lived in it for several years without molestation. Lately, however, some unknown enemy unexpectedly presented an anonymous Petition, saying, That my Husband was one of a nest of robbers ; and that the three generations, from the Grand-father to the Grandson, were all rogues. That there were now twenty pieces of treasure deposited under the ' Three Dedicated Rooms,' and, that when the hoard was taken up, the particulars would be understood. The Mandarin having seen this document, quietly sent some thief-takers forward, to raise up the hoard. Contrary to all expectation, they sure enough produced from under the flooring, twenty pieces of treasure. My Husband was then apprehended, and taken to the Mandarin's Court. He was pointed out as a harbourer of thieves, and punished severely with torture and beating, in order that he might discover his associates, together with the rest of the spoil which they might have taken.

" My Husband endeavoured, with all his might, to solve this business, but could not make it out clear. This money not only was not his, but he knew not from whence it had flown thither. As the circumstances of its coming were not plain, it was impossible to unravel the cause. We might, however, still rejoice that no

one appeared to have lost it. The Mandarin committed my Husband on suspicion, and has not yet decided on the nature of his crime. My Husband daily pondered the subject, and considered that as this Property originally belonged to your Lordship's family, it was possible that your Grand-father formerly deposited the treasure in the ground, and your Father, not knowing of the circumstance, did not take it away. Hence, that which ought to have been a profitable concern, turned out to be a source of misfortune.

"It is not at present to be discussed, whether this be so or not. We only entreat that your Lordship will claim it; this money will then be disposed of. When the money is once disposed of, my Husband will, in the midst of death, be restored to life. As it will be your Lordship who restores his existence, all our Property ought to become yours. How much more, then, this Pleasure Ground, and these few Apartments, which were constructed by your Father with infinite pains and labour. Every thing has its owner. These, then, truly ought to revert to your family. There cannot remain the least dissatisfaction on our part. We entreat that your Lordship will not reject them."

Ke-woo, having heard these words, felt very suspicious. He then said in answer, "My family has of old observed a maxim,

only one Section; examine it a little, and you will learn whether they were afterwards got the better of. There remains But it is not known from whence these misfortunes arose, or

departure.

ingly, and having returned him ten thousand thanks, took her When the woman had heard these words, she rejoiced exceed-

death unjustly."

couse be released from prison; and doubtless, will not be put to adjudgment. If the charges are not true, your Husband will of full in examining the case, as it is highly necessary to have a clear had a meeting with the Queen. I will then desire him to be careful proper for me to claim it. Do you now go and wait till I have treasure, it has no concern with me whatever; and it will not be reason why you should give them back for nothing. As to the back to you. Then, indeed, I may have them; but there is no if I want them again, I must take the original price and pay it Deeds, and were not conjured away by your relations. Therefore, were, however, sold with all the proper forms of Brokers and ments were all of them originally possessed by my Family. They that. It is true enough, that the Pleasure Ground and the Apartment throwing yourselves upon my support, we will say nothing about not to receive the offers of the common People. As to your

SECTION III.

ARGUMENT.

“A BENEVOLENT PERSONAGE LAYS A PLOT TO CIRCUMVENT THE COVETOUS MAN. THE VIRTUOUS MAGISTRATE DILIGENTLY ENDEAVOURS TO CLEAR UP A DOUBTFUL CASE.”

YU KE-WOO, having heard what the woman had to say, returned home. He then fancied himself to be the examining Magistrate, and again and again considered the matter in different lights, saying, “Not to mention that this treasure is not the patrimony of my Ancestors, yet, allowing that it were so, how came their Son to know nothing about it; nor my kindred to contend for its possession? On the contrary, it was a Person out of the family who knew of it, and presented a Petition on the subject. As the Petition was without a name, it is plain that he must be an enemy: I have no doubt about it. At the same time, supposing that he

had some cause of disagreement, it surely was not well to charge the other with such a vile business, and to point him out as a harbourer of thieves. Then, again, at the time of taking up the treasure, the Petitioner's words were verified, and it answered exactly to the amount specified in the document, without being more or less. It is difficult to conceive, that he who presented the Petition, for the sake of gratifying a secret enmity, should be willing to risk such a vast sum, and having placed it in another's ground, should go and carry on such a foolish business."

He considered it for several days, but could make nothing of the matter. It was the constant subject of his thoughts; and during his sleep, and in his dreams, he cried out, and muttered broken sentences. His Mother, hearing him, asked what was the matter. He then took the woman's words, and recounted them minutely. When she first heard him, his Mother, likewise, was very suspicious; but having considered for a time, discovered it, and exclaimed, "It must be, it must be! This treasure does indeed belong to my family; the man was right enough in his conjectures. When your Father was alive, he had a friend who came from a distance. This friend remained several nights in the lowest of the Three Dedicated Rooms; and perceived a white rat, which ran about, and then darted into the floor. At the time of his departure, he spoke to your Father, desiring him by no means to sell the Apartments;

for he might, hereafter, acquire some unlooked for treasure. By all appearances, this treasure has come to light. Your Father, by not taking it, made it a source of misfortune to others; do you then go and recognize it, and thereby save the man's life."

Ke-woo answered, "There is something more to be said on this subject. Such an idle story as this, is not fit for the mouth of a respectable Personage; and when I talk about a white rat to the Hœn, who knows but he will suspect that I covet that large sum of money; and not liking to claim it, have trumped up this story, in order to impose upon simple People. Besides, neither was this white rat seen by the eyes of my Father, nor was this idle story related by my Father's mouth. The more I consider it, the more vain does it appear; it may indeed be called the dream of a fool. If it were the Property of my family, my Father should have seen it; or how happened it, that I myself perceived nothing of the kind, but that it should appear to another. The whole story is false; there is no occasion to believe it. Still, however, it will be proper to consult with the Hœn, and to clear up this doubtful business, in order to save a guiltless plebeian. This will be acting like a virtuous officer."

Just as he had done speaking, a servant suddenly announced that the Hœn had arrived to pay his respects. Ke-woo said, "I

was just wishing to see him ; make haste, and request that he will come in." When the Hœn had paid his respects, and talked a little on general subjects, he waited not till Ke-woo had opened his mouth, but took up the doubtful affair, and requested his instruction, saying, " Tang such a one,* the possessor of the hoard, has again and again been closely examined, but the truth could not be obtained. He yesterday made a deposition saying, that the place, where the hoard was discovered, originally belonged to your family ; and that, therefore, the treasure must have been left by your Ancestors I accordingly came, in the first place, to pay my respects ; and secondly, to request your instruction, not knowing whether such be the case or not."

Ke-woo said, " My family, for several successive generations, has been very poor ; nor did my immediate predecessors accumulate any thing. I, therefore, cannot rashly lay claim to the treasure ; for by so doing, I should acquire a bad name. There must be something else in this affair ; nor is it necessary to say, that it is a hoard accumulated by a nest of thieves. I entreat, Sir,

* The Hœn was acquainted with merely his Sing, or his surname, which, among the Chinese, is always placed before the Ming or the Tsze, the name or the epithet. He therefore said, Tang mow, " Tang such a one."

that you will still continue a clear investigation, and effect a decision of the business. If you can bring the crime home to the prisoner Tang, then well and good."

The Hœn said, "At the period when your Father departed this life,* though you, Sir, was still a child, and therefore, perhaps, was not fully acquainted with former circumstances; yet, can we not ask your Mother, whether, before the Property was disposed of, she saw or heard of any thing particular?"

Ke-woo answered, "I have already asked my Mother, but she talks a little at random; and it is not what my Father said. As I am now, Sir, speaking before you, it is not proper for me to say any thing unadvisedly. I will therefore, keep it to myself." The Hœn, hearing this, insisted upon his telling it out; but Ke-woo was determined to say nothing.

His Mother, was fortunately standing behind the screen, and wishing sincerely to do a good action, desired her Steward to go

* The Chinese, like the Ancient Romans, have a superstitious aversion to mentioning a Person's death in direct terms. The expression here used, is Sœn she, "to pass over to immortality, or becoming immortal."

out, and taking the story in question, recount it minutely for his Master. When the Hœn heard it, he considered silently for some time, and then said to the Steward, “ I will trouble you to go in and ask, where is the dwelling house of him who saw the white rat; whether he is at present alive or not: whether his family is rich or poor; on what terms of intimacy was your Master with him during his life time; and whether they were in the habit of rendering each other mutual assistance? I have to request that your Lady will speak with precision; as the present day’s enquiry may serve in the place of a formal trial; and, perhaps, in the course of the discussion, this obscure case may be cleared up.”

The Steward went in for a while, and coming back, answered, “ My Mistress says, that the Person who saw the white rat, was from afar; and lived in such a Foo, and such a Hœn.* He is not yet dead, and his fortune is very large. He is a man of great virtue; who sets a small value on riches, and was on terms of strictest friendship with my former Master. Seeing that he had sold his Pleasure Ground, and that he must hereafter part with his Rooms, he wanted to produce the money and redeem it for him. As my former Master would not consent, his friend, there-

* Vide Note, page 6.

fore, went no farther. The words in question, are those which he uttered at the period of his departure." The Héen, having considered a little, directed the Steward to go in and ask, saying, " Did he, after the death of your Ladyship's husband, come to pay his vows to the deceased, and then meet with your Ladyship? Pray mention any expression which you might have heard him utter."

The Steward went in, and returned, saying, " When my Master had been dead for upwards of ten years, his friend then knew of it, and came on purpose to pay honors to his memory. Seeing that the Apartments were sold, he was very much surprised; and asked, " After my departure, did you obtain that unlooked for treasure, (which I predicted?) My Mistress answered, that indeed they did not obtain it. He then sighed, and said, " It is a fine thing for those who bought the Property. Deceitful in their hearts, and contriving plots to get possession of the buildings, they have acquired wealth which they did not deserve. By and by, however, they will meet with an unlooked for calamity." A very few days after his departure, some Persons brought an accusation against the family of Tang, and gave rise to this business. My Mistress constantly praised and admired him, saying, that he was one who could see into futurity

The Héen, having heard thus far, laughed heartily, and going

towards the screen, made a low bow, saying, “ Many thanks to your Ladyship for your instruction, which has enabled me, a dull Magistrate, to make out this extraordinary business. There is no necessity for further inquiry. I will trouble your messenger to bring a receipt, and will then send the twenty pieces of treasure to your house.

Ke-woo said, “ What is your reason for so doing ; I beg that you, Sir, will instruct me on this subject.” The Hœn answered, “ These twenty pieces of treasure were neither left by your Ancestors, nor were they plundered by the prisoner Targ. The fact was just this. That eminent Personage wished to redeem the Property for your Father ; but as your Father possessed a very independent disposition, and tenaciously refused, his friend on this account deposited the money, giving it to him as the means of redeeming the Property hereafter. As he did not wish to tell this plainly, he pretended the agency of some Spirit ; with the idea that, having waited till he was gone, your Father would dig up the treasure. When he came to pay honours to the deceased, seeing that he had not recovered the Pleasure Ground, but had also sold his Dwelling, your friend then knew that the treasure was in the hands of the enemy, and was vexed beyond measure. At his departure, therefore, he left an anonymous Petition, with the intention of waiting till the family was broken, and the Pro-

erty dispersed. As the truth is now plain, your original possessions ought to be restored, and presented back to you. What is there to say against this?"

Ke-woo, having heard this, though in his heart he applauded him, still had an objection to the measure, from the suspicion which would accrue. He did not wish to thank the Höen in too great a hurry; but making him a bow, said, that "He had formed an excellent conclusion, and must be possessed of admirable wisdom. That though Lung-too* himself were to re-appear, he could not equal this. At the same time, (said he,) though you conclude this treasure must have been left by our generous friend, still there are no Persons to bear witness to it, and it is not well for me to put in a claim rashly. I intreat, Sir, that you will keep it in your treasury, to supply the wants of the People during famine."

While he was still declining the acceptance of it, a Servant came in, with a red ticket in his hand, and in a whisper, announced to his Master, saying, "The Person, of whom you have

* A famous Magistrate of Ancient times. Lung-too-ta-heö-sze, was the name of his situation; his real name being Paou-wän-ching. He is now deified, and has temples to his memory.

just now been talking,* is at the door. He says, that he has [come from the distance of above a thousand Le,† to pay his respects to my Mistress. As the Hœn is present, I ought not to announce him; but since he is acquainted with the business, and has arrived at a very lucky moment, I therefore let you know, Sir, as you may wish to request his entrance for the purpose of questioning him." Ke-woo rejoiced greatly, and informed the Hœn. The latter was ready to dance with joy, and desired that he might quickly be requested to enter.

He appeared to be a Person of great respectability, with a round face, and white locks. He paid his respects to his friend, but only slightly regarded the Hœn, who was a stranger to him; and having made a bow, advanced onward, saying, "The object of my coming to day, was to see the Wife of my deceased friend. I came not to court the rich and powerful; nor do your affairs concern me, a Person from the Country. I cannot presume to visit you; so shew me the way into the House, that I may go and see the Lady."

* This Servant must have waited at the conference. It is customary among the Chinese to have a number of attendants present on all occasions of ceremony.

† In the Maps of China, drawn by the Jesuits, 250 Le are allowed to a degree.

Ke-woo said, "As my venerable friend has come from a distance, it is not right to treat him as a visitor. Since the Hœn, however, is concerned in a difficult affair, and wants to ask you some questions; and as it is a great occurrence to find you here, we entreat you will not object to sitting down for a moment."

The old Gentleman hearing these words, made his obeisance and sat down. The Hœn took some tea with him; and then, bowing, said, "About twenty years since, you performed, Sir, an act of great virtue. No Person at first knew of it. It has just now fallen to my lot to bring the matter to light. With respect to that treasure, which was given to your friend, without the least notice, except by some reference to the agency of Spirits, pray, Sir, was not you the author of it?"

When the old Gentleman heard this, he was taken by surprise, and for some time did not speak; having recovered his embarrassment, he said in answer, "How should such a rustic as I perform any act of great virtue! What, Sir, can you mean by your question?"

Ke-woo said, "Some expressions, respecting a white rat, were heard to proceed, Sir, from your mouth. On account of a certain suspicious affair, they were going to impute the crime of

harbouring thieves, to a worthy Person. As I could not bear this, I requested the Hœn to set him at liberty. While we were talking about it, we, by degrees, got a clue to the subject: but, since we are not certain, whether the story of the white rat be true or false, we have to request a word from you, Sir, to settle it."

The old Gentleman determinedly refused, and would not speak; till a message came from the Mistress of the House, begging him to give up all the truth, in order that a worthy Person might be exculpated. He then laughed, and taking the circumstances which had been profoundly secreted in his breast for upwards of twenty years, let the whole out. They accorded to a tittle with what the Hœn had said. Having directed the People to bring the treasure, in order that they might examine the letters and marks upon its surface; all these particulars agreed exactly,

The Hœn and Ke-woo admired the old Gentleman's great virtues; Ke-woo expatiated with the old Gentleman on the penetrating genius of the Hœn; while the Hœn, again, with the old Gentleman, dealt out their praises on the conduct of Ke-woo, who had conferred benefits instead of cherishing resentment. "Such actions as these," said they, "would be hereafter talked of far and wide; one might know this without divination."

They went on with their praises of each other without ceasing ; and the attendants who were present, put their hands to their mouths in order to repress their laughter, saying, that “ The Héen had issued orders to apprehend him, who had presented the anonymous Petition. Now, when he had found him out, instead of giving him a beating, he was sitting down and conversing with him. This was quite a new thing !”

When the Héen returned to his office, he sent a messenger to deliver the twenty pieces of treasure, as well as to procure a receipt for the same. Ke-woo, however, would not receive it. He wrote back a letter to the Héen, requesting that he would give this money over to the family of Tang, and redeem the Property with it. That, in the first place, this would be fulfilling the intentions of his Father ; secondly, it would accord with the wishes of his generous friend ; and lastly, it would enable Tang’s family to purchase some other residence. Thus, neither the givers, nor the receivers, would be injured in the least.

All parties praised such unexampled generosity. The Héen, in compliance with the words of the letter, released the prisoner Tang from his confinement, and delivering to him the original price, received from him the two Deeds, by which the Property had been sold. A messenger being sent off with these, the

Pleasure Ground, and the Apartments, were delivered into the possession of their original Master.

On the same day, in the highest of the “Three Dedicated Rooms,” he offered up wine, as a token of gratitude to heaven; saying, “Thus amply has my Father’s virtue been rewarded; thus bitter has been the recompense of Tang’s crimes. O! how is it, that men are afraid of virtue; or how is it, that they delight in being vicious!”

Tang Yē-chuen’s Son and his Wife, made out a Deed, as before, delivering up their Persons, and, together with the price of the House, whic’l they had received from the Hēen, offered it to Ke-woo, entreating that he would accept of their services for the remainder of their lives. Ke-woo resolutely refused the acceptance; but at the same time quieted them with kind words. Then the Husband and Wife, having engraved a tablet, wishing him long life, took it home and made offerings to it. Though they could not prevail upon him to receive them into his service, they recognized him as their Master. They not only endeavoured to recompense his past favors; but also wanted every body to know that they belonged to the family of Yu; for then no Person would venture to molest them.

In order to remember these circumstances, every one had a Stanza of verses, the object of which was to advise Persons of opulence, not to be contriving schemes for the acquirement of their Neighbours' Property. The lines were to this effect.

“ By want compell'd, he sold his House and Land,
 “ Both House and Land, and Purchasers, return;
 “ Thus Profit ends the course by Virtue plann'd,
 “ While envious Plotters their misfortunes mourn.”

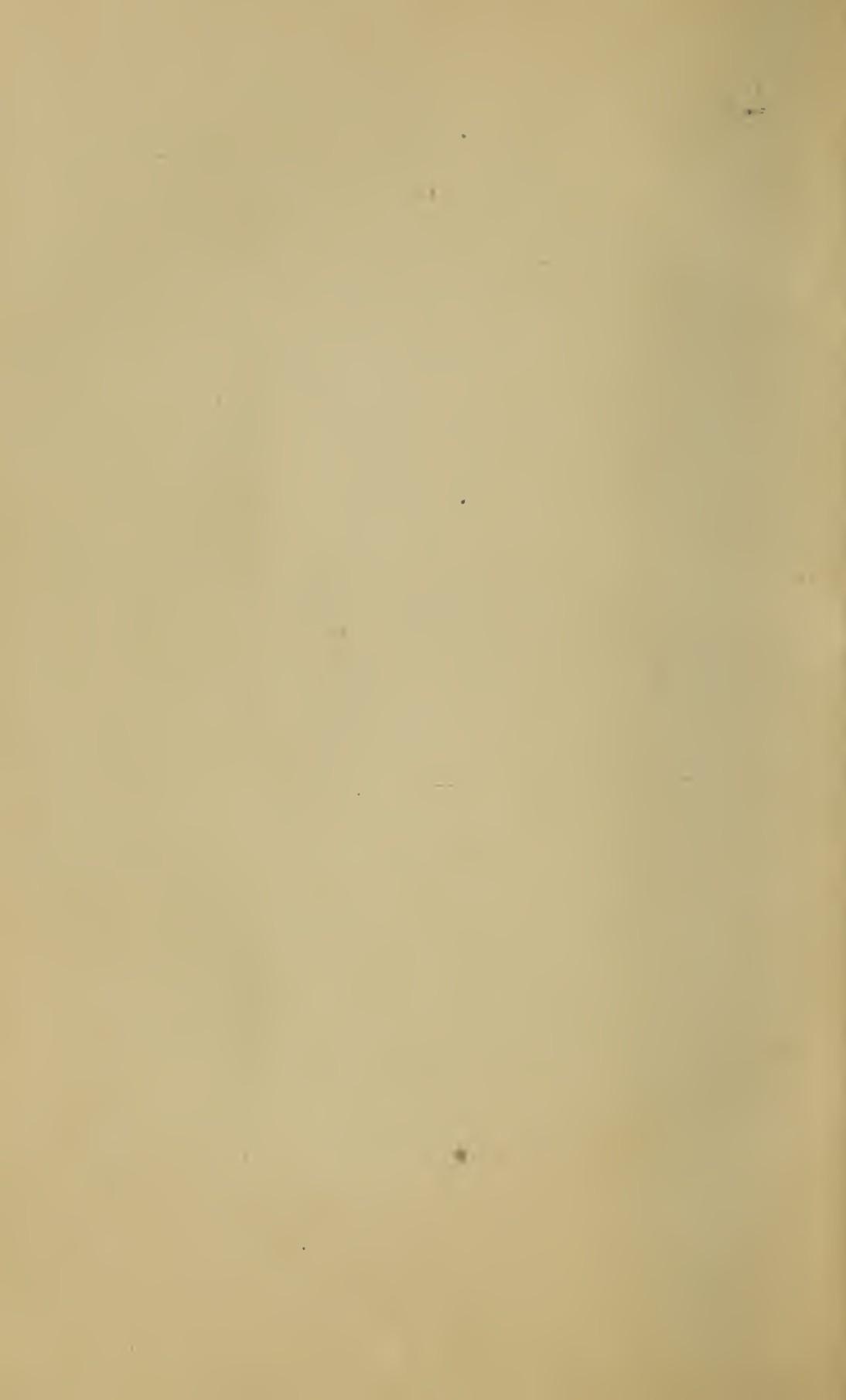
M O R A L.

The clear judgment of the Hœn, the disinterested generosity of the old Friend, and the moderation of Ke-woo, in living retired, without cherishing resentment, are all three deserving of everlasting remembrance. Those who are Magistrates, ought to make the Hœn their example. Country Gentlemen ought to take a lesson of Ke-woo. Those People, however, who possess great wealth, should not altogether copy the old Friend, because his conduct, in presenting the anonymous Petition, cannot be held forth for imitation. As to the actions of such generous friends

hitherto, but very few are worthy to be imitated. Those few whose conduct can be recommended, have been men of justice. With respect, then, to such generous friends, the difference between those who are just, and those who are only generous, consists, in the conduct of the one being worthy of imitation, and that of the others not.

F I N I S.







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Author [Morrison, Robert] (comp. and tr.)

Title Translations from the original Chinese, with
notes.

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